

LETTER
OF THE
HON. EDWARD BLAKE
TO THE
WEST DURHAM REFORM CONVENTION.

TO WHICH IS APPENDED

Correspondence as to the Inverary Meeting.



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To the Members of the West Durham Reform Convention

HUMEWOOD,

TORONTO, MARCH 5TH, 1891.

GENTLEMEN,

1. On the 11th February last I addressed to your President the following letter:—

“Some days ago I requested to be allowed to wait on the Convention.

“My object was to ask that my name should be withdrawn, as I found it impossible to accept the honor of a nomination; to give my reasons for this conclusion; to return my heartfelt thanks for the unbounded kindness of four and twenty years, and to bid my faithful friends an affectionate farewell.

“With this view I had prepared a paper for communication to them.

“It has been intimated to me that it is not desirable that I should take the course that I had chalked out, and consequently I defer the communication.

“Will you have the goodness to read this letter to the Convention.

“I will only add that the writing of it is the most painful event in the political life of which it is the close.”

2. I have now to ask you to receive my most grateful acknowledgements of your resolution of 12th February, couched in terms which I know are extravagantly beyond any deserts of mine, and which I can accept only as a last and crowning mark of your kindness and partiality.

3. I have feared from the beginning that every hour's fighting in the contest which ends to-day, must widen the rift between us; and that its close must leave me isolated in opinion, and deprived of any right to expect your continued confidence.

4. Therefore, I am cheered by no such expectation now.

But I must give you *“vera pro gratis,”* truths for compliments. You should know the grounds of my retirement.

And with that view, all excuse for reticence having ceased, I subjoin the paper referred to in my quoted letter.

I have, etc.,

EDWARD BLAKE.

PAPER REFERRED TO IN THE ABOVE LETTER.

To the Member. of the West Durham Reform Convention :

HUMEWOOD,

TORONTO, February 6th, 1891.

GENTLEMEN,—

1. I hope you will not deem me presumptuous in assuming that my name may be submitted to you as a Liberal candidate for West Durham.

By your extraordinary favor I have been permitted to serve you for the greater part of four and twenty years, during which long interval public affairs have mainly occupied my time and thoughts.

There is much to be done and much to be prevented at Ottawa; and, while deeply sensible of many shortcomings, it yet seems reasonable to suppose that the experience of all these years has made me less unfit than formerly for your service.

This is the sphere which offers the best prospect of usefulness to my country, during that short remainder of life in which I would fain labour for her, as remembering that “the night cometh, when no man can work.”

I have been anxious then to retain the seat with which the habits and interests of my life are interwoven; and to the duties of which I had arranged to devote the bulk of my time.

A re-nomination for West Durham would be my greatest prize; the severance of our connexion will inflict a bitter pang.

Therefore I pray you not to suppose that it is despondency at the failure of past efforts, or preference for ignoble ease or sordid toil, or indifference to your warm friendship and generous constancy, that leads me to ask the withdrawal of my name.

It is due to both of us that you should know my reasons.

2. Irrespective of the trade question, it is important in the interest of our country that the Liberal party, even if it fails to win the election, should yet maintain and increase its strength, in order to the efficient discharge of the great general duties devolving on it—duties at this moment cast into the

shade; but none the less essential to the public good.

3. Yet, plainly, the issue which the party has thought fit to tender for the judgment of the Electorate is that of Unrestricted Reciprocity, or absolute free trade with the States; an issue which has been maintained as "the sole party plank" ever since it was put forward in 1887.

4. Being at that time in Europe, I wrote, and after my return fully stated to leading men my views on this head.

It was agreed that, unless the conditions should change, it would clearly be my duty, when called on to address the Constituency, to make known those views; but the desire was expressed, in the party interest, that they should not be then published.

Having decided to yield to every wish of my friends compatible with honor, and hoping against hope that some turn of events might ameliorate a situation to me most painful, I yielded to this wish.

5. Lately, when a Provincial Convention was summoned, and our fifth session was approaching, I thought it right to convey to the Riding Association, as a basis for discussion, some brief intimation of my opinions.

But, on the statement of prominent men that its publication would, even then, be detrimental to party interests, my letter was held back for a few days.

Pending discussions on the matter, the dissolution has been precipitated; we are now in the throes of the election; and I feel bound to limit my confidence to you alone to-day.

6. Even when reduced, by the elimination of essential political considerations, to its simplest form, our Trade and Fiscal policy remains a vast and complex question, on which it is impossible, within the limits of an Address, to give much more than general conclusions, omitting many qualifications of statement and links of argument.

Of these conclusions some are in their nature speculative, and not demonstrable; and their realization may be precipitated, modified or retarded by political and sentimental, as well as commercial and economic considerations, and by events alike beyond our ken and our control.

They are stated then by no means dogmatically, which would be absurd; but only as the best forecasts in my power on doubtful matters, about which, had the times allowed, silence might have been more prudent than speech.

So much premised, let me tell you what I think.

7. In our present political condition, a moderate revenue tariff, approximating to free trade with all the world, and coupled with liberal provisions for reciprocal free trade with the States, would be, if practicable, our best arrangement.

But—though we may and should greatly improve our tariff, whose defects, anomalies and oppressions, very serious in 1886, have been much aggravated since; and though we may and should substantially retrench the public expenditure,—yet, as explained at Malvern, the result of our policy for the last thirteen years is that we shall be compelled for an indefinite time to raise the bulk of an enormous revenue by high duties on imports.

On the other side it seems to be the settled policy of the States to decline a limited reciprocity.

So that what would be best is not now attainable.

8. The Canadian Conservative policy has failed to accomplish the predictions of its promoters.

Its real tendency has been, as foretold twelve years ago, towards disintegration and annexation, instead of consolidation and the maintenance of that British connexion of which they claim to be the special guardians.

It has left us with a small population, a scanty immigration, and a North-West empty still; with enormous additions to our public debt and yearly charge, an extravagant system of expenditure, and an unjust and oppressive tariff: with restricted markets for our needs, whether to buy or to sell, and all the hosts of evils (greatly intensified by our special conditions) thence arising; with trade diverted from its natural into forced and therefore less profitable channels; and with unfriendly relations and frowning tariff walls, ever more and more estranging us from the mighty English speaking nation to the South, our neighbors and relations, with whom we ought to be, as it was promised that we should be, living in generous amity and liberal intercourse.

Worse; far worse! It has left us with lowered standards of public virtue, and a death-like apathy in public opinion; with racial, religious and Provincial animosities rather inflamed than soothed; with a subservient parliament, an autocratic executive, debauched constituencies and corrupted and corrupting classes; with lessened self-reliance and increased dependence on the public chest and on legislative aids; and possessed withal by a boastful jingo spirit, far enough removed from true manliness, loudly proclaiming unreal conditions and exaggerated sentiments, while actual facts and genuine opinions are suppressed.

It has left us with our hands tied; our future compromised; and in such a plight that, whether we stand or move, we must run some risks which else we might have either declined, or encountered with greater promise of success.

9. Yet let us never despair of our country! It is a goodly land; endowed with great recuperative powers and vast resources, as yet almost undeveloped; inhabited by populations moral and religious, sober and industrious, virtuous and thrifty, capable and instructed—the descendants of a choice immigration, of men of mark and courage, energy and enterprise; in the breasts of whose children still should glow the sparks of those ancestral fires.

Under such conditions all is not lost! "Though much be taken, much abides." And if we do but wake from our delusive dreams, face the stern facts in time, repair our errors, and amend our ways, there may still remain for us, despite the irrevocable past, a future, if not so clear and bright as we might once have hoped, yet fair and honorable, dignified and secure.

10. Let me glance at some of the economic propositions which are advanced for our approval.

And, first, as to that revival in Britain of Home and Colonial Agricultural protection which Conservatives invite us to expect.

Fairtraders and Federationists, Tories and Protectionists to the contrary, notwithstanding—there is I believe no reasonable prospect that the people of the United Kingdom will seriously engage in a struggle, to which their whole Liberal party is opposed, and which their Conservative Prime Minister has likened to a civil war—a struggle to turn back for forty years the clock of time, and to achieve a social, industrial and economic revolution—in order to re-impose protective duties which shall effectively restrict, in favor of their own

landlords, and of Colonial producers like ourselves, the supply of their staple foods.

The increase of foreign manufactures, in part stimulated by hostile tariffs, may rather darken and contract the prospects of Britain as the workshop of the world; some of her dependencies may propose to assert their manhood, and even to assume their places, alone or in partnership with others, in the great family of nations; she may justly discredit to-day certain of the dogmas of the older school of political economy; her present generation may be less instructed in its fundamental and impregnable propositions than were their fathers who lived through the Corn law campaigns; her impatient Democracy may incline to the suggested remedies, however unsuited to her case, of retaliation or reciprocal preference; yet, for all that, I cannot bring myself to believe that she will ever decide to tax the bread and beef which sustain the toilers in her industrial hive.

And, indeed, it seems difficult to conceive a suggestion which, coming from Canada, would be more calculated than this to alienate British feeling; even though accompanied by the sop of a delusive differential duty in favor of British manufactures.

11. While that free market which the United Kingdom, on a just conception of its own interests, opens permanently to all the world, is to us of very great value: and while every prudent effort should be made to enlarge our exports there and elsewhere beyond the seas; yet the results of all such efforts must be far below those to flow from a free market throughout our own continent.

12. Though the United States tariff will (and, indeed, unless very high sugar duties be reimposed, must) for a long time remain, like our own, decidedly protective; still there is a fair expectation, based on the last election there, that sounder economic views than those of the sitting Congress will soon prevail, and that their tariff will be re-adjusted on a basis much more moderate and favorable to the consumer than that which preceded the McKinley Bill; and may eventually approach what is known as a revenue tariff, incidentally, though still substantially, protective.

13. Having regard to this expectation, unrestricted free trade with the States, secured for a long term of years, would (even though accompanied by higher duties against the rest of the world than I for one admire), give us in practice the great blessing of a measure of free trade, much larger than we now enjoy or can otherwise attain; it would greatly advance our most material interests, and help our natural, our largest, most substantial and most promising industries; it would create an influx of population and capital; and promote a rapid development of forces and materials now almost unused; in three words it would give us men, money and markets.

Thus it would emphatically be for the general and lasting good. And this, although of course it would produce, as all great changes do, temporary derangement of business, and local losses; would strike hard some spindling and exotic industries, wholly tariff born, tariff bred, and tariff fed; and would put upon their mettle a good many manufacturers unaccustomed to the keen breath of competition, and others who would be obliged to adopt the specialization and the improved methods of production and distribution, which, to the signal advantage of the general consuming public, a large market allows and demands.

14. Assuming consent on the part of the States, our financial difficulty is to be considered.

Obviously, any practicable plan involves differential duties against the United Kingdom and the rest of the world.

But, even with such duties, the gaps in our revenue, due to the loss of present taxes on imports from the States and on imports from Britain, to be replaced by Home and U. S. manufactures, would be very great; incapable of being filled by a tea and coffee tax, a bill tax, and other available taxes of a like nature, and by practicable economies.

Direct taxation, even in its most promising form, a succession tax, is, I regret to say, at present out of the question. And of the financial problem presented by Unrestricted Reciprocity I have seen no solution which would leave us without a great deficit.

15. I have said that any feasible plan involves differential duties; but it does more. It involves—as to the bulk by agreement, and as to much from the necessity of the case—the substantial assimilation, in their leading features, of the tariffs of the two countries.

The absence of agreement would give to each country power to disturb at will the industrial system of the other; and Unrestricted Reciprocity without an agreed assimilation of duties is an unsubstantial dream.

For example, the States could not at present, without destroying their industrial system, admit free our woollen or iron manufactures, the produce of wool or iron freely imported by us from beyond seas; nor could we, without destroying ours, levy on raw materials higher duties than those laid by the States.

At the same time, our revenue necessities would constrain us to call for duties, at the most productive (which, of course, does not mean the highest) rate, on whatever imports might remain available to us for revenue purposes.

Again, differing rates of duty on imported goods, of a class also produced here or in the States, would open a wide door to frauds on the transfers of goods of that class between the two countries—a door which could be but imperfectly barred by increased, vexatious and rigorous Customs examinations into the country of origin.

16. Since any practicable arrangement does substantially involve, not only differential duties, but a common tariff, Unrestricted Reciprocity becomes, in these its redeeming features, difficult to distinguish from Commercial Union.

And Commercial Union—establishing a common tariff, abolishing international custom houses, and dividing the total duties between the two countries in agreed proportions—is the more available, perhaps the only available plan.

It is much more likely to be accepted by the States; and it would also have advantages for Canada, in both the Trade and the Revenue aspects, over Unrestricted Reciprocity; which, while failing to secure to us substantial control over our tariff, would provide still less adequately for our revenue needs, and would greatly hamper trade by its stringent Customs examinations.

17. Permanence in the new relation is of high consequence, both directly and indirectly, to the Agricultural interest; and is absolutely essential in order to secure the full development of other great interests, to prevent needless disaster to important industries and to realize many of the benefits of the plan.

Without assured permanence some Conservative predictions of evil, else fallacious, would come true; for our undeniable natural advantages in raw materials, labour, situation and facilities would be unnaturally handicapped.

No manufacturer, looking to the Continental market, would fix or even enlarge his capital or business in the country of five millions, at the risk of being cut off from the country of sixty-five millions.

Our neighbors, instead of engaging in manufactures here, would take our markets with goods manufactured there.

And our raw materials, instead of being finished on the ground, would be exported to be finished abroad.

Uncertainty would alarm capital and paralyze enterprise; and therefore I repeat that permanence is essential to success.

18. The revenue requirements and other financial conditions of the two countries are not identical; each will change; and each may change diversely from the other.

It might be possible to agree on a tariff for a year or two. It would be impossible for either country to fix its tariff for a long term. Changes in the stipulated tariff must therefore be provided for.

19. It would not be practicable to remit the decision as to such changes to a Joint Board.

And whatever shape the arrangement might take it would be necessary to concede to the States, if not a formal, at any rate a practical control in respect of changes.

The latter result would flow from a provision that, in case of difference, either party might terminate the treaty; a stipulation which would in all human probability result in concession by Canada to the States; while its existence would deprive the treaty of that assured permanency whose importance has been demonstrated.

I see no plan for combining the two elements of permanency of the treaty and variability of the tariff, which does not involve the practical control of the latter by the States.

And I can readily conceive conditions under which, notwithstanding her right to threaten a withdrawal, Canada would have much less influence in procuring or preventing changes than she would enjoy did she compose several States of the Union.

20. Amongst the British people the Canadian preference of United States over British manufactures would be, perhaps, less unpopular, considered on economic grounds alone, than the alternative scheme of food taxes to which I have referred.

Accompanied, as it ought to be, by a fair settlement of all differences with the States, and by the establishment on a firm basis of cordial relations between all English speaking peoples, it would secure high political advantages to the United Kingdom.

And the greater prosperity of Canada, in which the British investor is deeply concerned; and from which, spite of all tariff obstacles, the British manufacturer too must reap some slight advantage; would mitigate hostility to the scheme.

But after all, it would be taken in very bad part, on economic grounds, by the British manufacturing interests, and on Imperial grounds, by other important elements of the population; and it would seriously affect the present tone and feelings in regard to the Colonial relation.

21. The tendency in Canada of unrestricted free trade with the States, high duties being maintained against the United Kingdom, would be towards Political Union; and the more successful the plan the stronger the tendency, both by reason of the community of interests, the intermingling of populations, the more intimate business and social connexions, and the trade and fiscal relations, amounting to dependency, which it would create with the States; and of the greater isolation and divergency from Britain which it would produce; and also, and especially, through inconveniences experienced in the maintenance, and apprehensions entertained as to the termination of the treaty.

Our hopes and our fears alike would draw one way.

We would then indeed be "looking to Washington."

Nor is there any fair comparison, in this respect, between the new and the old reciprocal arrangements.

22. It is not absolutely certain that the States would, under existing circumstances, enter into a treaty for Unrestricted Reciprocity.

Though the benefits would be in truth far more widely diffused, yet it is only our Neighbour's northern fringe that actually realizes the existence of a material interest in free trade with Canada; and, even there, protectionist fallacies greatly obscure the judgment; various events have excited in many quarters unfavorable feelings; and there is a strong prejudice against lasting treaty arrangements.

But the dominating fact is that perhaps fifty millions of their population know little, and care less, about free trade with Canada.

Thus it happens that mutually beneficial business relations between the two countries, on principles fair to each, are yet of far more obvious and pressing importance to us as a whole than to them as a whole. And it is this fact which perhaps most strongly emphasizes the supreme folly of a Canadian retaliatory policy.

The national sentiment, which is essential to secure their assent to the arrangement, cannot then be evoked by its business element alone.

The advantage of adjusting, by a comprehensive settlement, all causes of difference between the two countries would be very great to both, and might advance the plan; but, on the same reasoning, this advantage also is clearer and greater to us than to them, and cannot therefore be safely reckoned on to evoke the desired sentiment.

An underlying feeling, however, there is—latent it may be and inactive, half unconscious and unformulated; disguised in some quarters, doubted, deprecated or repudiated in others; likely perhaps (should party lines be drawn), to be favored rather by Republicans than by Democrats—yet real, deep-seated and widespread; and eminently calculated so to attract the popular imagination and fire the popular heart as to transcend all party lines, and to become indeed a truly national sentiment.

This feeling is that, some day, sooner or later, a political reorganization of the continent should and must take place; not by force, but by the free consent of its inhabitants.

This sentiment, I believe, will largely color opinion as to the plan; which, accordingly, may on the one hand, be favored as the best step in the direction of political reorganization; or, on the other, discountenanced upon the mistaken theory

that its rejection would be the best step in the same direction.

And there are obvious forces and methods in our neighbor's, as in all popular politics, which forbid us altogether to disregard the latter contingency.

The treaty once made, the vantage ground it gave would naturally be used for the accomplishment of its ulterior purpose; and this political end would be a great factor in the consideration by the States or Canadian views upon changes in the joint tariff, or as to the maintenance or termination of the treaty.

23. The reorganization to which our neighbors look is, of course, the unification of the continent.

But next to, though much less warmly than, Political Union, they would favor Canadian Independence; and it is quite possible that, in connexion with such a policy, advantageous International arrangements on various most important points, not here brought into discussion, might be secured.

24. Without needless lengthy recapitulation, you will see, by contrasting my views with those of the present advocates of free trade with the States, several serious questions of difficulty and difference—for example, uniformity of tariff, and its control; deficiency of revenue, and its supply—on which I am unable to adopt their opinions.

25. But one large topic remains, arising out of or rather underlying this whole statement, the bearing of which I had hoped, until the news of the dissolution, to reserve for oral discussion.

You will doubtless have inferred my opinion that the policy of absolute free trade with the States is intimately connected with, and cannot properly be divorced from the question of our political future, which therefore it must force into the party field.

While not disguising my view that events have already greatly narrowed our apparent range, and impeded our apparent freedom of action, I hold by the suggestion that our future should not be settled (as we have allowed it to be settled in the past, perhaps much further than we yet realize), by accident or unwittingly; by sidewinds or the inglorious policy of drift.

It should rather be determined, so far as it remains within our own control, of fixed purpose, after due discussion and deliberation, as becomes a free people resolving on their lot.

This large problem, involving in our case various suggested plans to which others must be parties, demanded the anxious weighing of conflicting considerations, and a long course of courageous and independent, but calm and dispassionate handling, before it could be advantageously introduced into a party field like ours.

Such handling it has not yet received.

Nor, indeed, could that have been deemed in the least degree necessary by those promoters of free trade with the States, who advance their plan in the belief that it by no means involves our political future; and that it tends, not to the weakening of existing or the creation of new political relations, but rather to the strengthening of the present connexion.

Thus it has come to pass that the public mind is in one sense even more unready than formerly, and is at any rate quite unprepared, for the intelligent decision, and hardly disposed even for the fair and candid discussion of the question.

26. It would not be possible here even to epitomize the many points which occur upon the several projects for Federation with the United Kingdom,

for Independence, and for Political Union with the States, all of which are thought to have once been, or still to remain, open in some sense to our choice.

Were that possible, it would yet be absurd to employ the critical moment of an election in the preliminaries of such a wide debate.

Nor do I believe, as I have said, that a wise solution is to be advanced by bringing the discussion into the party field to-day.

And at any rate I am anxious that you should have the opportunity, if you think it worth your while, of considering what I have been obliged to set before you, unprejudiced by any further intimation of my views on this point.

Thus I do not add to the many matters with which you have been necessarily troubled any speculations of my own as to our future.

27. It is not needful that I should.

Whatever you or I may think on that head; whether we like or dislike, believe or disbelieve in Political Union; must we not agree that the subject is one of great moment, towards the practical settlement of which we should take no serious step without reflection, or in ignorance of what we are doing?

Assuming that absolute free trade with the States, best described as Commercial Union, may and ought to come, I believe that it can and should come only as an incident, or at any rate as a well understood precursor of Political Union; for which indeed we should be able to make better terms before than after the surrender of our Commercial Independence.

Then so believing—believing that the decision of the Trade question involves that of the Constitutional issue, for which you are unprepared, and with which you do not even conceive yourselves to be dealing—how can I properly recommend you now to decide on Commercial Union?

28. Do not suppose that these are with me questions of yesterday.

Long ago, while leader of the Liberal party, it became my duty to examine into a similar design, submitted by a political architect of some reputation.

I thought the foundations insecure, the lines defective, and the estimates of cost inadequate.

It seemed to me that the proposed structure could be erected only on that different foundation, those other lines, and that larger cost which has been described.

For this it was conceded that the people were not then prepared.

And I was unable to propose the design for adoption as a party plan.

My views remain unchanged to-day.

29. It has caused me deep distress to differ from my political friends.

Gravely distrusting my judgment as to opinions unshared, difficulties unfelt, and consequences unforeseen by them, I sincerely wish to be found—as I have earnestly striven to find myself—in error.

30. But it is to our own convictions, right or wrong, that we must, after all, be true.

To put forward opinions we do not hold, or ignore difficulties we cannot solve, or deny or conceal the tendencies and results of policies we undertake to propound, would be dishonest and unworthy.

And therefore I could not address the Electors of West Durham without speaking my mind freely on the points I have advanced.

31. Had the elections been deferred to the usual

and expected time, I should probably have felt it right within a short space so to address them.

But I do not find myself free to-day to speak my mind.

Without being so presumptuous as to imagine that my judgment is entitled to weight when unconfirmed by that of my political friends, I yet recognize the extensive and effective use, too commonly made by the adversary, of the slightest divergent expression of opinion from the humblest member of an opposing organization.

My late relation to the party emphasizes the present application of this remark.

And I have come to the conclusion, confirmed by the judgment of leading men, that the publication of these opinions would inflict much more damage on my friends than the slight injury which may result from my silent withdrawal.

32. Now, while unable to fight under false colours, neither can I endure, at the very height and crisis of the battle into which a wrongful dissolution has

unexpectedly plunged the Liberal party, to take a different tack, or to turn one hostile gun against the well-loved friends, in whose company, whether as comrade or commander, I have sailed so many stormy seas, and fought so many hot engagements; whose general course I approve; and whose ships I wish, not wrecked, but safe in port.

33. What then is left for me to do?

This only. Since I cannot help, to hurt as little as I may; and therefore to go down, with my own little ship, in silence; bearing for the moment all consequent misconstruction; and leaving, till the Ides of March be past, the explanation of my action.

34. May I beg you then to treat my statement, made now to you alone, as given for the time in sacred confidence; to accept my heartfelt thanks and undying gratitude for your past kindness; and to let me bid you, with emotion deeper than I can express, an affectionate farewell.

Your faithful servant,

EDWARD BLAKE.

*Correspondence between Mr. Blake and Mr. Kirkpatrick
as to the Inverary Meeting.*

(MR. BLAKE TO MR. KIRKPATRICK).

TORONTO, March 2, 1891.

MY DEAR KIRKPATRICK,—I enclose a cutting from the *Empire* of a telegraphic report of a meeting at Inverary on Feb. 27th, at which you are said to have been present.

I shall be much obliged by your informing me how far the report is correct; and dictating for my use an accurate statement of what occurred.

I am sure you will forgive this trouble; and will believe that I would do as much for you.

Yours faithfully,

EDWARD BLAKE.

HON. G. A. KIRKPATRICK,
Kingston.

Please return the cutting.

[Enclosure.] "*Empire*."

"SLANDERING EDWARD BLAKE.

"SIR RICHARD CARTWRIGHT'S SON LEADS THE
"LIBELOUS GANG.

"KINGSTON, Feb. 27.—At Inverary last night "Harry Bawden, the Grit candidate whom Mr. "Kirkpatrick defeated in the last election, in speaking of Mr. Blake's retirement, said Hon. Edward "Blake had been paid \$25,000 by the C. P. R. to "keep his mouth shut, and that was why he was "silent.

"Mr. KIRKPATRICK—I deny that statement; it "is a disgraceful thing to say of an honorable gentleman, and I call for the proof of it."

"Mr. BAWDEN—I can prove it. I call on Mr. "Cartwright (Sir Richard's son, who was present) "to prove it."

"Mr. Alex. Cartwright was coming forward to "substantiate Bawden's statement, but, Mr. Kirkpatrick insisting on the production of proof, Mr. "Cartwright said, 'I have no written proof.'

(MR. KIRKPATRICK TO MR. BLAKE).

KINGSTON, Ont., 3rd March, 1891.

MY DEAR BLAKE,—In answer to yours of yesterday, I have to say that I was present at the meeting in Inverary on Thursday, 26th ulto., when Mr. Bawden, speaking of you, or your retirement from public life, said "Mr. Blake had been paid \$25,000 by the C.P.R. to keep his mouth shut." I was sitting on the platform beside him and I at once arose and said "That is not true; it is scandalous (or disgraceful) to say it of an honorable man, and I demand the proof of it." Mr. Bawden, to my astonishment, said "I can prove it," and called Mr. A. Cartwright, who was at the other end of the room near the door. Mr. Cartwright then attempted to come forward through the crowd, but before he had come very far, I said, "I want the proof," Mr. Cartwright stopping said, "I have

not the printed proof" or "the written proof," I forget which. The crowd cheered, and after silence was restored Mr. Bawden continued his speech. Mr. Cartwright subsequently spoke, and he said you were an honorable man, but you had received as a professional fee, as you had a perfect right, the largest fee ever given in Canada, though such large fees were not infrequent in England, \$25,000 as a retainer from the C.P.R. in the case about the crossing of the Manitoba and South Western Railway, and that you had received other fees as a professional man from the C.P.R., and that you felt a delicacy in sitting in the House and voting on measures affecting that company.

Last evening at Brewers Mills Mr. Cartwright made a statement about the matter, and said he had not slandered you, but had spoken of you as an honorable man, and called upon me to corroborate his statement. I said he had spoken of you as an honorable man, and had not slandered you, but his companion Mr. Bawden had done so, and had called upon him to prove it, which he could not do. Mr. Cartwright said he did not hear Mr. Bawden use the words imputed him, and, being at a distance, perhaps he did not hear the offensive words used. He feels very much hurt at the idea of his saying anything which could be construed as offensive to you, and I do not think he intended to do so.

I felt hurt at the accusation made by Mr. Bawden and at once resented it.

Yours very truly,

GEORGE A. KIRKPATRICK.

HON. EDWARD BLAKE, Q.C.,
Toronto.

P. S.—I return the cutting.

(MR. BLAKE TO MR. KIRKPATRICK).

HUMWOOD,

TORONTO, MARCH 5, 1891.

MY DEAR KIRKPATRICK,—

I am obliged by your letter of 3rd.

I observe in the papers the following telegram:—

"KINGSTON, ONT., March 3.—The statement "that I said the Hon. Edward Blake was paid "\$25,000 to keep his mouth shut, is false. I appreciate the honor of Edward Blake too highly "to make any such statement.

"(Sd.) HENRY BAWDEN."

I assume that this document is not authentic; because I should be sorry to think that the late Liberal candidate for Frontenac had aggravated the slanderous falsehood of the speech by the hypocritical falsehood of the denial.

As to Mr. Bawden's witness, Mr. Cartwright, notwithstanding your too generous words, the spirit in which he offered and gave his "evidence" is too obvious to be misunderstood or explained

away; nor am I able to adopt his opinions on the point of honor.

Were it true that I had accepted a retainer of \$25,000 in such a matter as the Manitoba Crossings case, I should have taken, not a reasonable fee to secure my professional services in a court, but an enormous gratuity, so disproportioned to the ostensible object as to be dishonorable to giver and receiver alike.

Were it true that I had thus or otherwise placed myself in such a relation to any clients that "I felt a delicacy in sitting in the House and voting on matters affecting" them, I should have been false to the views of duty on which I have acted for close upon a quarter of a century of time, and at a loss of far more than a quarter of a million of money.

In the latter of these two allegations there is not the smallest modicum of truth.

The former of them, from which the latter is inferred, is a mountain of most monstrous fiction, elaborated out of a molehill of most innocent fact.

It is true that I was offered retainers on both sides in the Manitoba Crossings case; the Company happened to come first; "first come first served" is the reasonable obligation of our profession; and

therefore, according to rule, I accepted the retainer of the Company, and not that of the Manitoba Government.

But it is not true, as Mr. Cartwright stated, that my retainer was \$25,000. It was but one-fiftieth part of that sum, a modest \$500; and, though I say it that should not, I gave my clients more than value for their money by my labours in the cause.

Forgive me, my dear Kirk, if I add that I should not have troubled you had these attacks been made by certain of my opponents and your friends. To such attacks from such quarters long habit has, I am sorry to say, made me callous.

But the sources and circumstances of this particular calumny have induced me to give it more notice than it perhaps deserved; and certainly more than it would otherwise have received from me.

Pray accept my grateful thanks for your own kindness and sense of fair play in the matter; and believe me,

Faithfully yours,

EDWARD BLAKE.

THE HON. G. A. KIRKPATRICK,
Kingston, Ont.

